

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 PC-01
DHA-02 MCT-01 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 OPR-02 SCS-03
SCA-01 CU-02 ACDA-07 IO-13 A-01 /099 W
-----101904Z 018646 /53

O 101245Z APR 77

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1209

AMCONSUL KARACHI NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LAHORE 0337

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: SECURITY SITUATION IN PUNJAB

REF: LAHORE 0336

1. SUMMARY: ALL DAY RIOTING IN LAHORE, WHICH LATE REPORTS INDICATE MAY HAVE INVOLVED AS MANY AS 40,000 DEMONSTRATORS, ENDED AROUND 1900 HOURS APRIL 9. OFFICIAL SOURCE PUT DEATH TOLL AT 8, WITH 166 INJURED, INCLUDING 89 POLICE. OPPOSITION SOURCE CLAIMS AT LEAST 22 AS DEAD, BUT ACTUAL FIGURE MMAY BE AS HIGH AS 50. NUMBER OF INJURED, SOURCE ESTIMATES, EXCEEDS 1,000. IN ADDITION TO PROPERTY EARLIER REPORTED DESTROYED (REFTEL), SIX BANKS WERE SET ON FIRE -- NO LOOTING REPORTED -- AND A FIRE TRUCK BURNED. COMPLETE HARTAL WAS OBSERVED IN MAIN DOWNTOWN SHOPPING AREAS. SIX (6) DEMONSTRATORS WERE KILLED BY POLICE FIRING IN LEIAH, AS PROTESTS SPREAD THROUGH PROVINCE. CONTRARY TO EARLIER REPORTS, NO MORE OPPOSITION LEADERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI (JI) SPIRITUAL LEADER MAULANA MAUDOODI ISSUED STATEMENT EVENING OF APRIL 9 CONDEMNING
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GOVERNMENT ACTION. ACTING PAKISTAN NATIONALLLL ALLIANCE (PNA) PRESIDENT NAWABZADA NUSRULLAH KAHN, LEADER OF OPPOSITION, HELD PRESS CCCCONFERENCE SAME NIGHT AND CALLED FOR FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS COUNTRYWIDE APRIL 10. PRO-OPPOSITION URDU DAILY NAWA-I-WAQT (APRIL 10) REPORTED THAT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST BHUTTO WERE STAGED BY PAKISTANIS IN NEW YORK APRIL 8, AND THAT A PAKISTANI STUDENT ORGANIZATION IN U.S. HAS SENT

A TELEGRAM TO THE PRESIDENT ABOUT SITUATION. BHUTTO REPORTEDLY REMAINS IN LAHORE AMID RUMORS THAT RENEWED EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO FIND A FORMULA FOR TALKS BETWEEN OPPOSITION AND GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, SHORT TERM OUTLOOK IS FOR CONTINUED CONFRONTATION. END SUMMARY.

2. DEMONSTRATIONS IN LAHORE APRIL 9, BLOODIEST CITY HAS SEEN SINCE OPPOSITION MOVEMENT BEGAN MARCH 14, HAVE LEFT AT LEAST 8 DEAD (ONE STUDENT) AND 166 INJURED, INCLUDING 89 POLICE (OFFICIAL SOURCES). ACTUAL FIGURE IS PROBABLY SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER. ONE PRESS REPORT INDICATES POLICE HAVE REFUSED TO GIVE UP SOME BODIES, AND HAVE FALSIFIED CAUSE OF DEATH FOR A NUMBER OF OTHERS. NO POLICE HAVE OFFICIALLY BEEN REPORTED DEAD. OPPOSITION ESTIMATES PROVIDED BY PNA CONTACT - ANWAR -- 22 CONFIRMED DEAD, 50 POSSIBLE, PLUS 1,000 OR MORE INJURED -- APPEAR INFLATED, BUT ARE PROBABLY CLOSER TO MARK. (VOA REPORTED 30 DEAD IN APRIL 10 MORNING BROADCAST.)

3. SOME 40,000 DEMONSTRATORS TOOK PART IN PROTEST MARCHES, ABOUT HALF OF WHOM REPORTEDLY CAME FROM OUTSIDE LAHORE. LARGE NUMBERS WERE BOTTLED UP BY POLICE ON SIDE ROADS OFF THE MALL, WHICH KEPT THEM AWAY FROM MAIN ACTION CLOSER TO ASSEMBLY HALL. MANY WERE WOMEN, A NUMBER OF WHOM WERE INJURED IN POLICE LATHI CHARGES. RUMOR PERSISTS THAT SOME HAVE DIED, BUT THIS REMAINS UNCONFIRMED. OTHERS, WHO HAVE BEEN REPORTED MISSING, ARE PROBABLY IN POLICE CUSTODY. DEMONSTRATORS INCLUDED SOME LABOR ELEMENTS, FIRST TIME WORKERS HAVE COME OUT FOR PNA IN LAHORE. STUDENTS ALSO PARTICIPATED. CONFIDENTIAL

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4. PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY COMPLETE HARTAL IN DOWNTOWN BUSINESS AREAS, WITH ALL STORES AND MARKETS CLOSED. SOME NATIONALIZED BANKS, FORCED BY GOVERNMENT TO REMAIN OPEN TO COUNTERACT HARTAL, SUFFERED HEAVY DAMAGE. DEMONSTRATORS FORCED THEIR WAY INSIDE SIX BRANCHES OF THE HABIB BANK AND SET THEM ON FIRE. NO MONEY WAS REPORTED STOLEN, BUT BANKS WERE LEFT IN COMPLETE SHAMBLES. ACCORDING TO ONE UNCONFIRMED PRESS REPORT, A BOMB WENT OFF NEAR THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY BUILDING SOMETIME DURING APRIL 9 PROCEEDINGS. RIOTERS BURNED A FIRE TRUCK AND REPORTEDLY T RANSACKED INTERIOR OF A FIRE STATION. SO FAR, ARMY HAS NOT BEEN CALLED ON TO ASSIST ACTIVELY IN MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER.

5. PNA DEMONSTRATIONS WERE STAGED APRIL 9 IN 23 OTHER TOWNS AND CITIES THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE. ACCORDING TO LATE REPORTS, POLICE SHOT AND KILLED SIX DEMONSTRATORS IN LEIAH (MUZAFFARGARH DISTRICT), AND THE ARMY HAD TO BE CALLED IN TO HELP STABILIZE SITUATION IN MULTAN, WHERE PROTESTORS ATTACKED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LAHORE 0337

BANKS AND SET FIRE TO HOUSE OF RAZI SHAH GARDEZI, MPA (PPP).
POLICE REPORTEDLY OPENED FIRE, BUT COULD NOT ADEQUATELY CONTROL
CROWD. IN SARGODHA, A DOZEN POLICE WERE INJURED BY BRICK-
BATTING WHEN THEY ATTEMPTED TO BREAK UP A PNA PROCESSION. 1,500
WOMEN MARCHED IN STREETS IN MINCHINABAD (BAHAWALNAGAR
DISTRICT) IN PROTEST AGAINST POLICE EXCESSES AND RIGGED ELECTION.
4 PROCESSIONS WERE TAKEN OUT IN LYALLPUR, WHICH ENDED PEACEFULLY
WITH ARREST OF 5 LOCAL PNA LEADERS. SIMILAR PROTEST MARCHES,
NOT ALL PEACEFUL, TOOK PLACE IN GUJRAT, SAHIWAL, BAHAWALPUR,
SHEIKHUPURA, JHANG, WAZIRABAD, KHANEWAL, SHUJABAD, VEHARI,
LODHRAN, D.G. KHAN, OKARA, PAKPATTAN, CHICHAWATNI, CHISHTIAN
AND OTHER PLACES.

6. NO OPPOSITION LEADERS HAVE YET BEEN ARRESTED AS RESULT OF
APRIL 9 EVENTS. NAWA-I-WAQT (APRIL 10) REPORTED THAT POLICE
TWICE ATTEMPTED TO ARREST NAWABZADA NUSRULLAH KHAN PREVIOUS
DAY, BUT FAILED WHEN PNA SUPPORTERS SURROUNDED HIM AND WOULDN'T
LET THEM THROUGH. PIR OF PAGARO DID NOT SHOW UP TO LEAD
ONE OF PROTEST MARCHES AS EXPECTED, AND IS BELIEVED TO STILL
BE AT LARGE. POLICE DETAINED BEGUMS ASGHAR KHAN AND MAUDOODI
MORNING OF APRIL 9, BUT RELEASED THEM UNHARMED SAME AFTERNOON.
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ABOUT 100 OTHER PERSONS WERE REPORTED ARRESTED, NONE OF THEM PROMINENT.

7. JI SPIRITUAL HEAD MAULANA MAUDOODI ISSUED STATEMENT EVENING OF APRIL 9 CONDEMNING GOVERNMENT ACTION, WHICH HE CALLED WORSE THAN BRITISH OR ANY PREVIOUS PAK GOVERNMENT HAD EVER INFLICTED ON PEOPLE OF LAHORE. MAUDOODI SAID THERE WAS NO PRECEDENT WHATSOEVER FOR WANTON POLICE ATTACK ON DEMONSTRATORS, WHO INCLUDED WOMEN AND STUDENTS. TAJ MOHAMMED LANGAH, FORMER PPP DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (PUNJAB) WHO BOLTED FROM PARTY LAST WEEK WITH HANDFUL OF OTHER DISSIDENTS INCLUDING FORMER MNA AHMAD RAZA KASURI, CALLED ON PROGRESSIVE FORCES TO COME OUT

AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. (LANGAH, A DISGRUNTLED LEFTIST, HAS FORMED A NEW PAKISTAN PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC PARTY TO OPPOSE PPP AND PNA.) ACTING PNA PRESIDENT NAWABZADA NUSRULLAH KHAN HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE END OF THE DAY (APRIL 9) AND THANKED PEOPLE OF PUNJAB FOR SUPPORT THEY HAVE GIVEN TO OPPOSITION. HE CALLED FOR FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY APRIL 10, CLAIMING STRUGGLE WILL CONTINUE IN SPITE OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO STOP IT. FUNERAL PRAYER MEETING WILL BE HELD AT PNA HEADQUARTERS IN LAHORE AT 1100 HOURS SAME DAY AND OTHER DEMONSTRATIONS/PROTESTS ARE EXPECTED.

8. NAWA-I-WAQT (APRIL 10) REPORTED 100 PAKISTANI STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED APRIL 8 IN FRONT OF NEW YORK TIMES AND DAILY NEWS OFFICES IN MANHATTAN. IN ADDITION, GROUP ALSO STAGED DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE UN. SAME EDITION CARRIED STORY THAT ANWAR BEG, PRESIDENT OF PAKISTANI STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION IN U.S., HAS SENT A TELEGRAM TO THE PRESIDENT ASKING HIM TO TAKE STEPS TO HELP RESOLVE CRISIS. IT IS ALSO REPORTED THAT A LARGE GROUP OF PAKISTANIS IN U.K. PLANS TO CARRY OUT A DEMONSTRATION APRIL 10 IN FRONT OF PAK EMBASSY TO SUPPORT PNA.

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9. BHUTTO IS REPORTEDLY STILL IN LAHORE WHERE SPECULATION IS RAMPANT THAT RENEWED EFFORTS ARE UNDERWAY TO GET OPPOSITION TO AGREE TO A DIALOGUE. HOWEVER, PROSPECTS FOR TALKS CURRENTLY APPEAR REMOTE AS PNA MOVEMENT GAINS INTENSITY IN PUNJAB. SUPPORT FROM LEFTISTS (LANGAH) AND ENTRY OF LABOR WILL ENCOURAGE PNA TO PERSEVERE. EFFORT TO PUBLICIZE MOVEMENT ABROAD INDICATES OPPOSITION IS INTENT ON TOUGHING IT OUT, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING. BHUTTO IS LEFT WITH OPTIONS OF MAKING UNILATERAL CONCESSIONS IN HOPE OPPOSITION WILL AGREE TO TALK, I.E., LIFTING EMERGENCY, FREEING PRISONERS, ETC., OR INCREASING USE OF BIG STICK, WHICH SO FAR HAS

PROVED COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. SITUATION REMAINS FLUID, WITH PPP
FACING INCREASINGLY SERIOUS CHALLENGE FROM OPPOSITION IN
PUNJAB.

10. LATE ITEM: (1900 HOURS) LOCAL PRESS SOURCE REPORTED AS
OF 1800 HOURS APRIL 10 THAT SEVERAL DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEEN
HELD IN LAHORE, BUT THERE WAS NO VIOLENCE. LARGE PROCESSION
WAS TAKEN OUT IN LYALLPUR, WHICH ENDED PEACEFULLY. NO
REPORTS YET FROM OTHER AREAS OF PROVINCE.
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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Subject: SECURITY SITUATION IN PUNJAB
TAGS: PINT, PORS, PK
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